Year	*Qty. ('000 MT)*	*Value (Rs/crore)*
1988-89	223.5	239.07
1989-90	236.7	296.40
1990-91	241.0	298.00

(Provisional)

(c) The following steps have been taken to increase the production and export of jute and jute goods:

i) Setting up of Special Jute Development Fund.

ii) Jute Agriculture Development Programme.

iii) Setting up of Jute Modernisation Fund.

iv) Flexibility to use all kinds of fibres/yarn for the manufacture of diversified jute products by jute/textile mills.

v) R&D activities to develop a new range of diversified jute products.

vi) Linking of DGS&D orders for supply of jute bags with the export obligation to export of jute products to GOA countries.

vii) External Market Assistance Scheme.

viii) Loss Sharing Scheme on participation in global tenders.

Recovery of Loans by Banks

3006. SHRI KRISHAN DUTT SULTANPURI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount of outstanding loans in nationalised banks during the last six months; and

(b) the steps being taken to realise the outstanding dues?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) As per data available from Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the total outstanding amount of loans, extended by the twenty nationalised banks, as on March 1991 (latest available) was Rs. 72060 crores, out of which the amount of overdues was Rs. 12184 crores.

(b) Various steps have been taken by RBI to reduce the amount of overdues and also to improve the recovery performance of the commercial banks in respect of their advances to various sectors. Some of the important steps are as follows:

1. Banks have been impressed upon to institute a viable recovery system with a view to help recycling the scarce resources of the banks to the needy and productive sectors of the economy on the one hand, and to improve the profitability and viability of the lending banks, on the other.

2. The Chief Executives of the banks have been advised to pay their personal attention to the monitoring of large advances.

3. Introduction of a comprehensive and uniform grading system to indicate the health of individual advances for the purpose of their effective monitoring and follow up.

4. To keep a watch on the recovery of top sticky accounts at the board level.

5. Taking action against the officials where advances are found to have become sticky due to their negligence, inefficiency etc.

Relaxation in restrictions on Imports

3007. SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Reserve Bank of India has further relaxed or propose to relax restrictions on imports with immediate effect;

(b) if so, the relaxations made so far by the Reserve Bank of India during the current year; and

(c) to what extent these relaxations have been helpful to the importers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) and (b). In the context of the country's difficult balance of payment position and significantly larger monetised deficit, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had imposed certain restrictions on imports as a short term measure aimed at containing overall demand. However, depending on the foreign exchange reserves position, various relaxations have been made from time to time. Accordingly, the restrictions like prescribed minimum cash margin and interest rate surcharge in import finance have been fully removed. The question of further relaxations, therefore, does not arise. However, the restrictions on inventory norms continue as it will help in curbing inflationary pressure in the economy besides ensuring better management of inventory by the industry.

(c) While the relaxations indicated above have undeniably assisted importers, its precise extent is difficult to quantify.

Purchase of Arms from U.K.

3008. SHRI MOHAN SINGH:
SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether U.K. has offered to sell defence equipment to India;

(b) whether the Government have accepted the offer; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) and (b). Offers for sale of defence equipment, received from various countries including U.K., are evaluated from the technical and commercial angles and decisions for acquisition are taken on the basis of the merits of each case.

(c) It would not be in the interest of security to disclose specific details of such cases.

[*Translation*]

Drug Trafficking

3009. SHRIMATI BASAVA RAJESWARI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have directed the State Governments to formulate a proper strategy and appoint nodal officers with appropriate levels of authority to ensure speedy disposal of cases relating to drug trafficking;

(b) if so, the number of such cases pending with the States; and